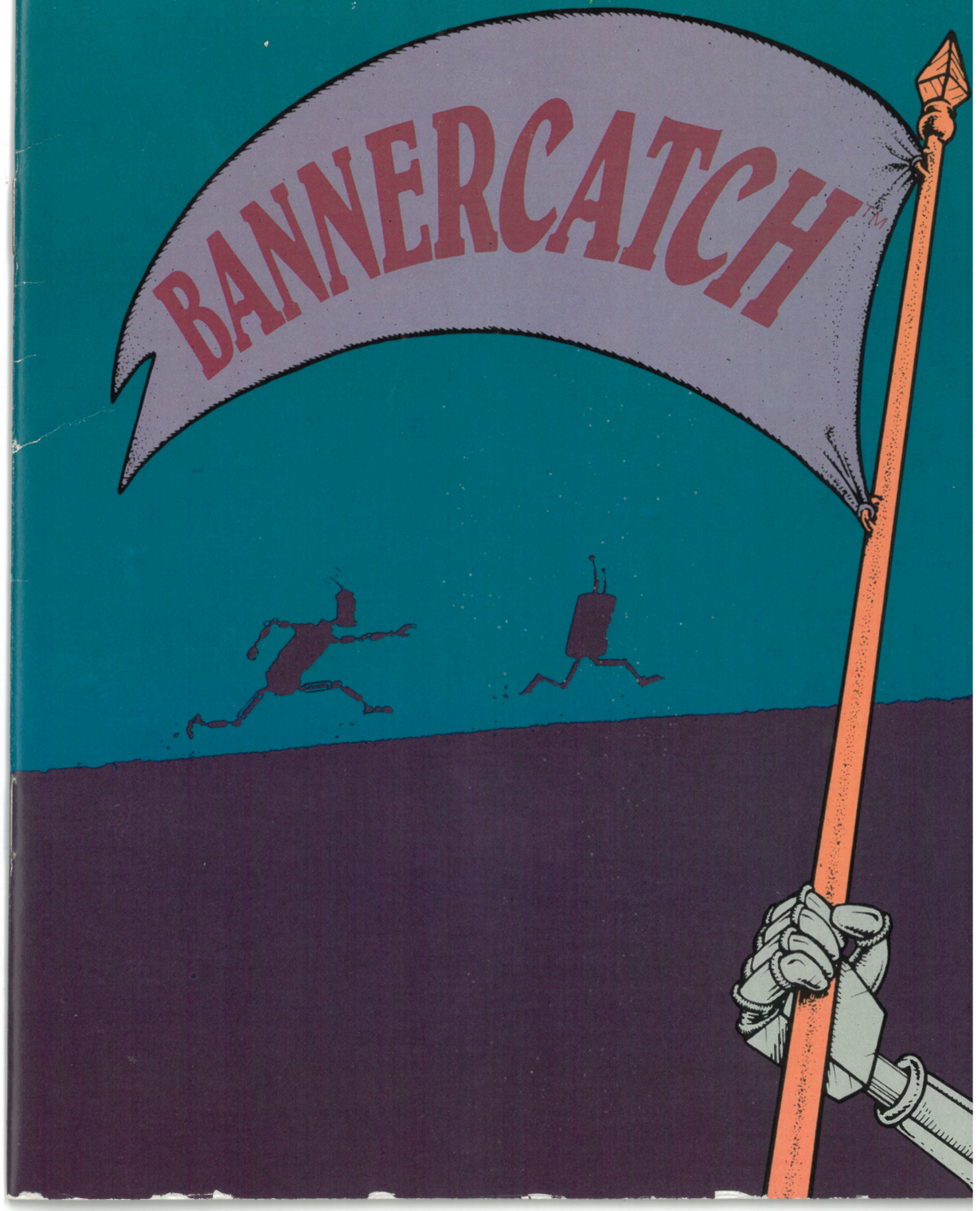
Scholastic Wizware™

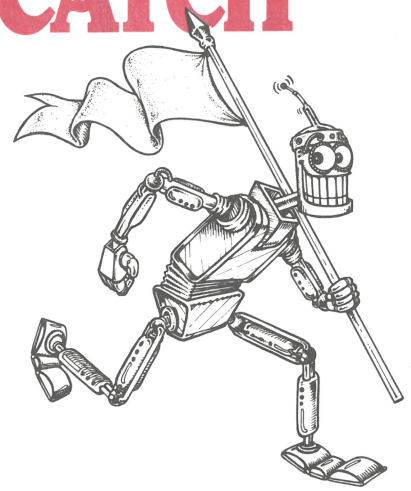
BANNERCATCH™



Scholastic Wizware™

Scholastic Inc. New York Toronto London Auckland Sydney Tokyo

BANNERCATCH



Max, Guardian of the Galactic Tollway, challenges you and your partner to play *Bannercatch*—a five-level game of team strategy and skill. In the game, you and your partner each control two humanoid robots. Max controls four robots. To win a game, your humanoids must travel to Max's zone, capture his flag, and bring it safely back to your zone. But be careful! As your humanoids are trying to capture Max's flag, Max's robots will be coming after yours. And unless you and your partner can outthink and outrace the robot raiders, Max will win the game.

According to legend, no one has ever seen Max's mysterious face—not even his robots. By mastering *Bannercatch,* you and your partner can be among the first to see Max face to face. Each time you win a game, a bit more of Max's face will be revealed. When you lose, part of his face will disappear.

As you play, Max will keep track of your score. Win three games more than the robots, and Max will move you to the next higher level of *Bannercatch.* At each new level, you'll compete against faster, smarter robots—robots that will amaze you with their speed and team skills.

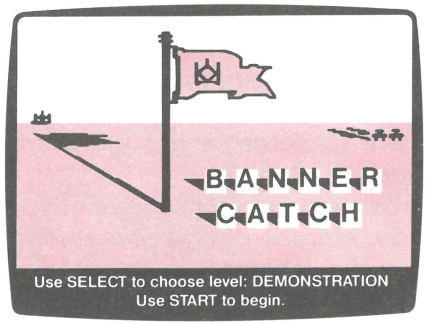
With practice, you'll reach Level 5—the level open only to *Bannercatch* players of the highest skill. But reaching Level 5 and unmasking Max won't be easy. To defeat Max and his robots, you and your partner will have to work together as a team. Plan your strategy carefully, and be sure to make the best possible use of your humanoids.

Here are some other suggestions for playing and winning *Bannercatch:*

- Use your joysticks to get all four of the humanoids working for you. Put one or two humanoids in charge of guarding your flag. Use the others to go after Max's flag.
- Get to know the layout of the playing field, especially the location of the safe areas. Humanoids and robots can't be tagged in the safe areas—unless they're carrying a captured flag.
- When Max's robots cross into your zone, use your humanoids to tag them and send them to jail.
- The white sensor dots on the playing field are Max's communications network. By stopping a humanoid on a dot and pressing the SPACE BAR, you can intercept Max's messages to his robots. However, the messages are written in code, and the decoding information is for robots only. Cracking the code will give you an important advantage.
- Use the SPACE BAR to freeze the game. With the game frozen, you and your partner will have time to plan your next move.
- Don't give up if one of Max's robots captures your flag. To win the game, the robot must bring the flag back to Max's zone. If you can catch and tag the robot before it reaches Max's zone, you'll recapture the flag.

In the rest of this handbook, you'll find more information to help you play *Bannercatch.* You'll find a map of the playing field and secret tips on breaking Max's communication code. You'll also discover descriptions of the different robots at Max's command, directions on moving and maneuvering your humanoids, and details on the *Bannercatch* scoring system.

GETTING STARTED

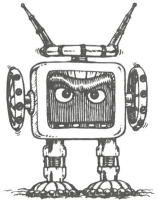


Instructions for loading *Bannercatch* into your computer are listed on the Reference Card. Each time you load *Bannercatch,* the computer will pause at the opening screen. At the bottom of the screen, you'll see instructions for selecting a level and starting a game.

You can select the demonstration mode, or game Levels 1 through 4. However, you won't be able to select Level 5. To get to this, the ultimate level, you must first defeat the Cha robots on Level 4.

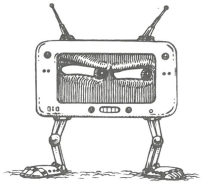
GAME LEVELS

Bannercatch has a demonstration mode and five play levels. At each of the five play levels, Max uses a different team of robots.



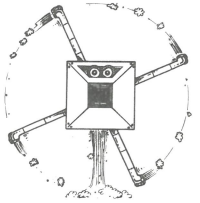
LEVEL 1: TOR

The Tor robots are slow, but steady. With practice, you will soon gain enough skill to defeat them. At this level, your humanoids will trip if they move too fast.



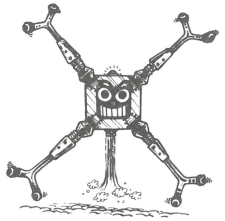
LEVEL 2: GHURKA

The Ghurka robots move faster than the Tor. They are more skilled in the art of teamwork, and they have greater vision.



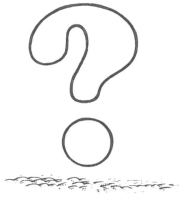
LEVEL 3: RAGNORAK

The Ragnorak possess all the skills of Ghurka robots, plus the ability to think and plan ahead. They seem to anticipate your every step. At this level, your humanoids are less likely to trip.



LEVEL 4: CHA

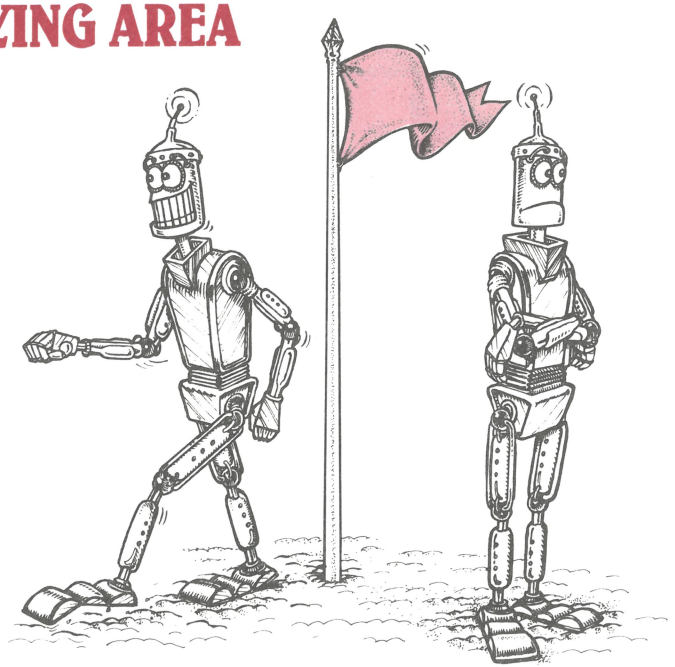
The Cha robots are very skilled and highly disciplined. They hop over trees and swim through the river. At this level, your humanoids will no longer trip.



LEVEL 5: ZWELI

The Zweli present the ultimate challenge, open only to those who have won three games on Level 4. Like Cha robots, the Zweli hop over trees and swim the river. However, the Zweli also possess the mysterious power to turn invisible.

THE PLAYING AREA



Bannercatch is played on a large field. The main playing area is enclosed within a wall. Openings in the wall allow your humanoids and Max's robots to move in and out. (See map, page 7).

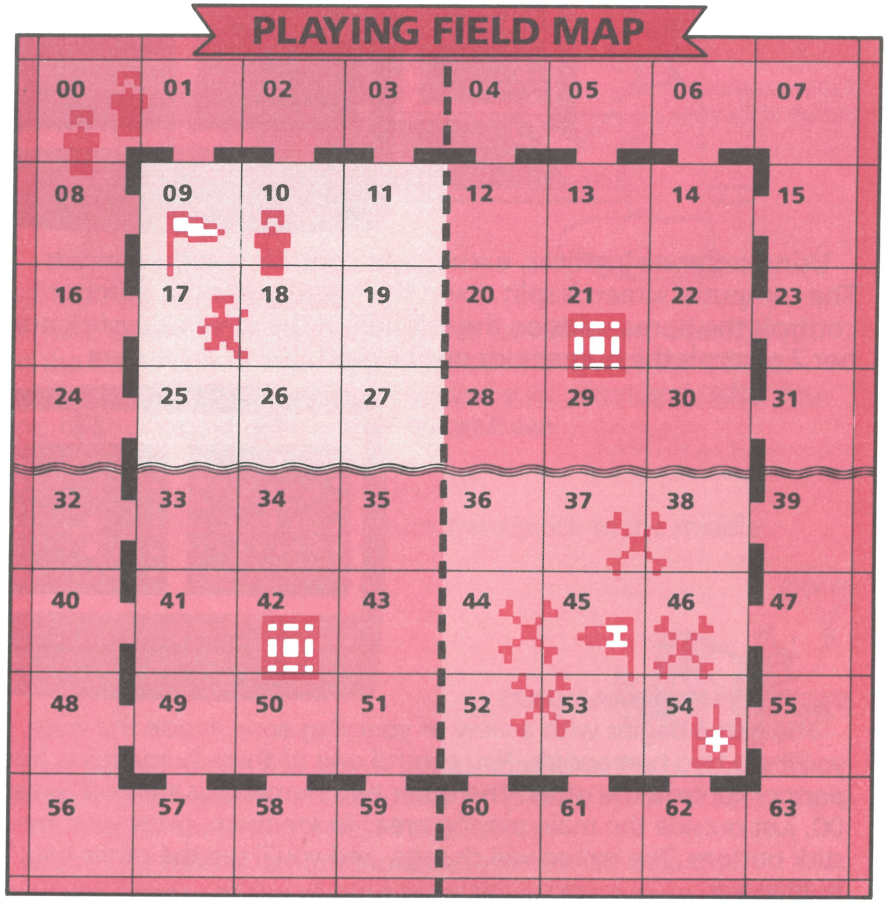
A river and dotted line divide the field into four zones: your home zone, Max's home zone, and two safe zones.

Each home zone also includes a flag zone —the place where a flag is located at the beginning of each game. The two flag zones—yours and Max's—are marked off by dotted lines. Each time you begin a new game, the location of the flags and their flag zones will change.

As the map shows, the playing field is further divided into *sectors.* There are a total of 64 sectors in the field, numbered from sector 00 to sector 63. On the computer screen, you can only see two sectors at a time—the sector you are in and the sector your partner is in. The sector numbers appear near the bottom of the screen. By looking at the sector numbers and the map, you'll be able to keep track of your location on the field.

BANNERCATCH

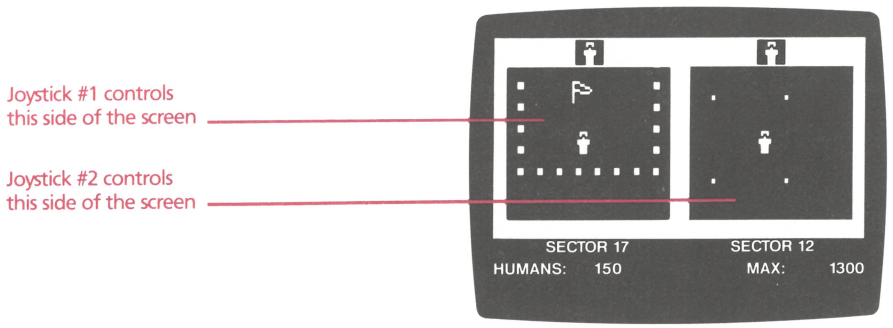
PLAYING FIELD MAP



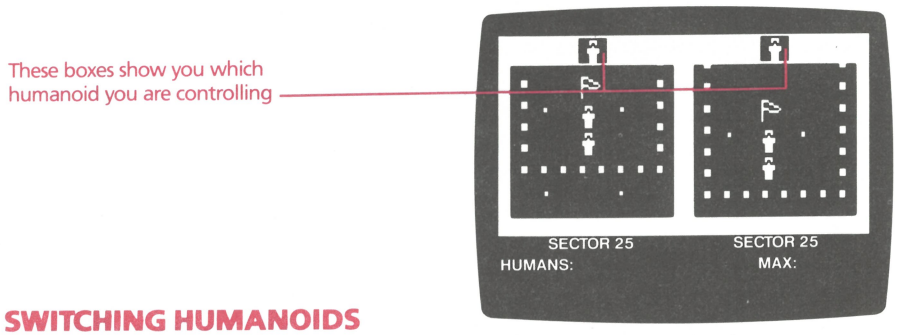
HUMANS' HOME ZONE
MAX'S ZONE
SAFE ZONE
"XX" ZONE (UNMAPPED TERRITORY)

Note: the flags and jails change location with each new game.

YOU AND YOUR HUMANOIDS


Joystick #1 controls this side of the screen
Joystick #2 controls this side of the screen
SECTOR 17
SECTOR 12
HUMANS: 150
MAX: 1300

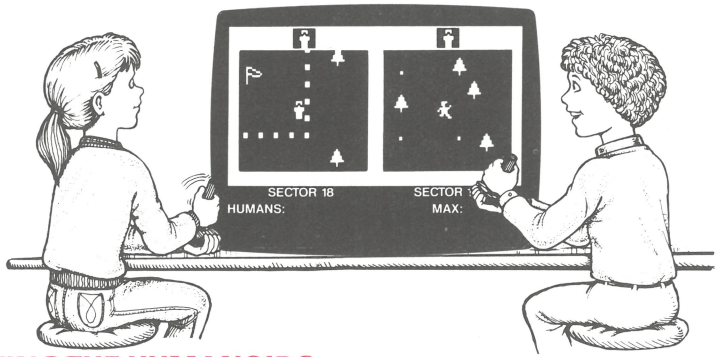
Using separate joysticks, each player controls two humanoids. The computer screen is split down the middle. Joystick number 1 controls the humanoids on the left half of the screen. Joystick number 2 controls the humanoids on the right side of the screen.



SWITCHING HUMANOIDS

The game begins with a view of your flag zone. Inside the zone, you'll see two humanoids. You control one of these humanoids. Your partner controls the other. The other two humanoids start off in sector 00, just outside the main playing area. To see them, press your joystick buttons. The screen will change, and you'll see the other two humanoids.

To get back to the humanoids you started with, press the joystick button again. As you press the button, keep an eye on the small boxes near the top of the screen. The figures inside the boxes will change. This tells you which humanoid you are controlling. EACH PLAYER CAN CONTROL ONLY ONE HUMANOID AT A TIME. Whenever you want to switch to controlling your other humanoid, you'll need to push the joystick button.

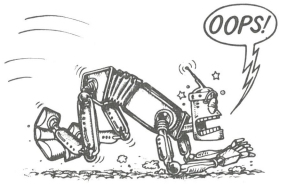


MOVING THE HUMANOIDS

To move a humanoid, push the joystick handle in the direction you want the humanoid to travel and hold it there. You'll hear a beep, indicating that the humanoid has received your command. After four beeps, the humanoid is moving as fast as it can.

STOPPING A MOVING HUMANOID

To stop a moving humanoid, return the joystick to the middle position.



RAISING A FALLEN HUMANOID

If a humanoid moves too fast or bumps into something, it will fall over. When this happens, it will quickly jump back up on its feet again.

GETTING LOST IN UNMAPPED TERRITORY

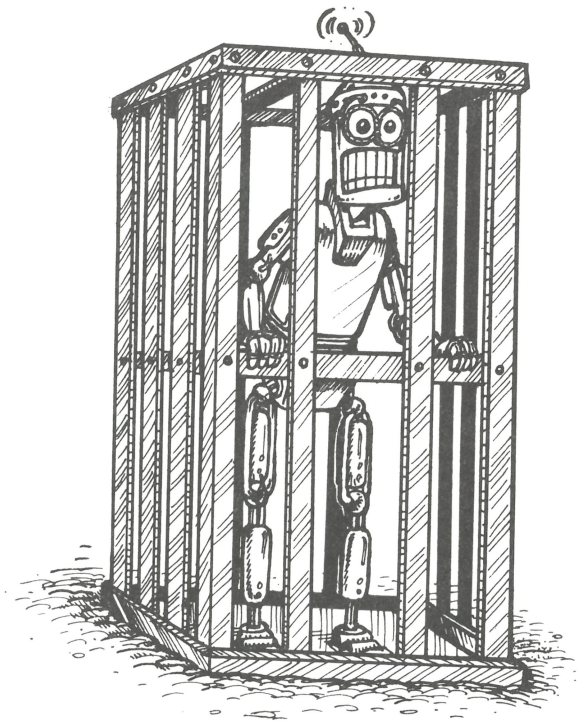
If you're not careful, a humanoid can wander off into the unmapped fringes of the playing area. When this happens, you'll have to help the humanoid find its way back. Also, when Max's robots capture your flag, they sometimes try to trick you by carrying the flag off into unmapped territory. If this happens, be patient. To win the game, the robots must eventually bring the flag back onto the playing field.

GOING TO JAIL

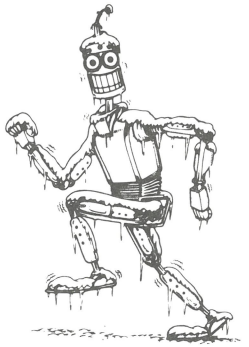
Any time Max's robots enter your zone, your humanoids can tag them and send them to jail. Of course, any time your humanoids cross into Max's zone, Max's robots can do the same to them.

There is no tagging allowed by either team in the following areas: the two safe zones, the area outside the wall, and the two flag zones. However, a humanoid or robot who is carrying a captured flag can be tagged almost anywhere. For them, only the flag zones are safe.

To free a captured humanoid, you must send another humanoid to the jail as a rescuer. When the humanoid rescuer reaches the jail, the door will open automatically and the prisoner will be released.



FREEZING THE GAME



At any time, you can freeze the game by pressing the SPACE BAR. When you hit the SPACE BAR, the game will stop, and the word FREEZE will appear at the bottom of the screen. Hit the SPACE BAR a second time, and the game will continue from the point where you left off.

Why would you want to freeze the game? Maybe the action is getting a little too fast, and you want a chance to catch your breath. Maybe you and your partner want to take time out to talk over strategy. Or maybe you just want to grab a sandwich. Whatever your reasons, you are free to use the freeze feature at any time.

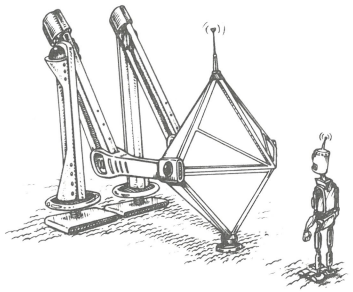
A final word on freezing. The game will freeze automatically whenever either team captures a flag. By freezing at this point, the game gives you time to plan your next move. For example, if you've captured Max's flag, how do you plan on carrying the flag safely back to your zone? If Max's robots have captured your flag, how will you manage to get it back?

RECAPTURING A FLAG

The game doesn't end when Max's robots capture your flag. Remember, for Max to win the game, the robots have to bring your flag safely back to their zone. To stop them, you must catch and tag the robot who is carrying the flag.

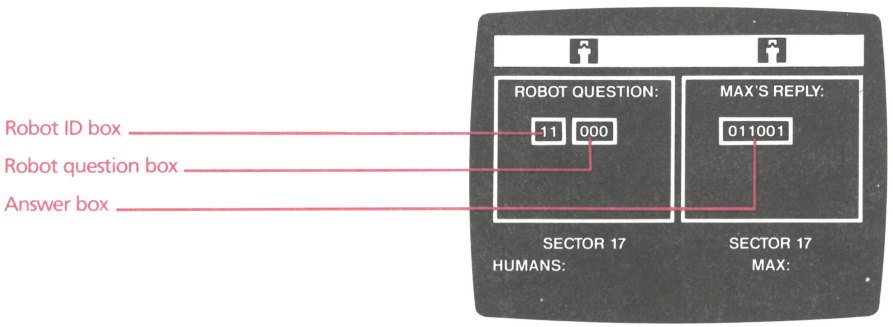
When you tag a robot who is carrying your flag, the flag reappears inside a new flag zone and the robot is sent to jail. The new flag will show up in the same sector where you tagged the robot. For example, if you tagged the robot in sector 18, the flag will be located in sector 18. The same thing happens when Max's robots tag a humanoid who has captured his flag.

OUTSMARTING MAX



Here's an interesting fact that can help you win *Bannercatch:* Max communicates with his robots through a network of sensors scattered across the field. On the computer screen, the sensors look like small white dots. If you place a humanoid directly on top of a sensor and press the SPACE BAR, you can find out what Max and his robots are saying to each other.

There's one catch, though—Max talks to his robots in a special language called *binary code.* However, once you figure out the code, you can intercept Max's messages by pretending to be one of his robots. Here's how you do it. First, place one of your humanoids on a sensor and press the SPACE BAR. The screen will change, revealing the code boxes Max used to communicate with the robots.



The first box is the two-digit Robot Identification Box. By typing the proper two digits into this box, you can trick Max into thinking that he's talking to one of his robots.

The second box is the Robot Question Box. By typing a three-digit binary code into this box, you can ask Max a question. For example, you can find out where the flags and jails are located, and what Max's robots are up to.

The last box is the Answer Box. If Max has fallen for your trick, he will answer your question here—in binary code, of course.

Use the information Max provides to your advantage. You'll need it to win against his faster, smarter robots, and to get a good look at his face.

WINNING GAMES

In each game, your goal is to capture Max's flag and bring it safely back to your zone. To win a game, your humanoids must return with Max's flag before his robots capture and return with yours.

When you win three games more than Max, you will automatically advance to the next game level (see page 4). Be warned, however, that every time Max wins a game, one of your wins is taken away. For example, let's say you win two games on Level 4. Then Max wins a game. At that point, you would be left with only one win. To advance to Level 5, you would have to win two more games in a row.

As you win games and advance through the levels, you will see more and more of Max's face. But if you lose, part of Max's face will disappear.

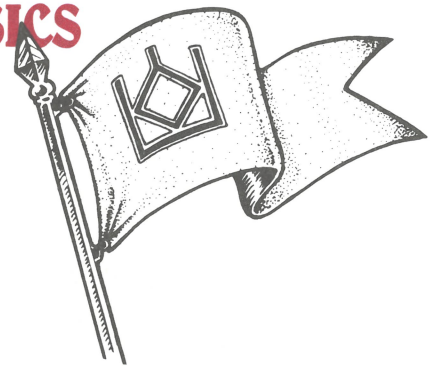
SCORING POINTS

As you play *Bannercatch,* the computer keeps track of two scores: your score and Max's. Here's how you and Max score points:

	POINTS
Tagging a robot or humanoid who is NOT carrying a flag	50
Tagging a robot or humanoid who is carrying a captured flag	100
Capturing a flag	150
Winning a game	1000

Your total score is very important, because it determines how much of Max's face you'll see at the end of each game. The farther ahead of Max you are, the more of his face you'll see.

BANNERCATCH BASICS



BINARY CODE A special language made up of only two digits: 1 and 0. Max uses this code to talk with his robots.

FALLING OVER If they move too fast or bump into something, your humanoids will fall over. When this happens, the humanoid will quickly jump back up on its feet again.

FLAG The object to capture. You and your partner have one. Max has one.

FLAG ZONE A safe area around each flag. On the computer screen, the flag zones appear as rectangles marked off by dotted lines. A humanoid or robot within these rectangles cannot be tagged by an opponent.

FREEZING Stopping the game. To freeze the action, press the SPACE BAR once. To continue the game, press the SPACE BAR again. The game will pick up from the point where you left off. Whenever a flag is captured, the game freezes automatically. This gives you time to plan your next move.

HOME ZONE For you and your humanoids, the upper left quarter of the playing field. At the start of each game, your flag and your humanoids will be somewhere in this zone. To win the game, your humanoids must bring Max's flag back to your home zone.

JAIL The place where tagged robots are sent. Your humanoids are sent to a jail located in the upper-right safe zone. Max's robots are sent to jail in the lower-left safe zone. To free a captured humanoid, send another humanoid to the jail as a rescuer.

MAX'S FACE The great mystery. The more games you win, the more of Max's face you'll see. If you lose a game, part of his face will disappear.

MAX'S ZONE The lower-right quarter of the playing field. In each game, Max, his robots, and his flags start off in this zone. Your humanoids must enter Max's zone to capture his flag.

MOVING Getting your humanoids going. To start a humanoid, push the joystick in the direction you want the humanoid to travel.

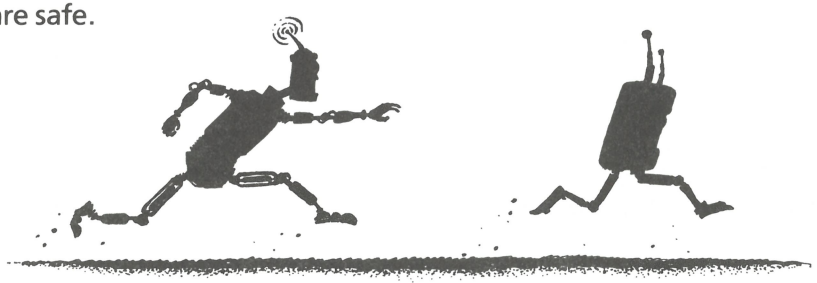
SAFE ZONES Areas where humanoids and robots can't be tagged (as long as they're not carrying a flag). The upper-right and lower-left quarters of the playing field are safe zones. So is the area outside the wall.

SENSORS Max's communication network. The sensors are the white dots scattered across the playing field. When you place one of your humanoids on a sensor and press the SPACE BAR, the game screen will disappear. You'll then see the special code screen. By decoding the message in the code boxes, you can find out what Max and his robots are saying to each other. If you type in the binary codes for a robot number and a question, Max will be tricked into thinking you're a robot, and he'll give you an answer.

STOPPING Bringing the joystick to the middle position will stop a moving humanoid.

SWITCHING HUMANOIDS Changing which humanoid you control. To switch humanoids, push the joystick button.

TAGGING Catching or being caught by a robot. When Max's robots enter your home zone, your humanoids can tag them and send them to jail. When your humanoids cross into Max's zone, Max's robots can do the same to them. A robot or humanoid who is carrying a flag can be tagged almost anywhere—only the flag zones are safe.



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